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TEAMING FOR TRANSITION

Teaming for Effective Transition!

by Suzanne Kucharczyk

We know that effective transition happens best when everyone involved is on the same page, understands their and others' roles and responsibilities, and is working towards the same goals for youth with disabilities. "Everyone" means those directly responsible for the transition process including the young adult, their family, educators, service providers in the school setting, and future adult settings and services. "Everyone" also includes those who support the transition process indirectly, like school and district administrators and faculty from teacher and related service provider preparation programs. It takes a team of professionals who understand the transition process to effectively plan for and create learning opportunities preparing youth with disabilities for their post-school futures.

Faculty at the University of Arkansas in Fayetteville have teamed up with Arkansas Transition Services, Arkansas high schools, and other state and national partners to create a program to prepare these future team members. With support from a grant awarded by the US Department of Education Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP), Teaming for Transition is a newly formed specialization program in transition services available to graduate students across 6 disciplines: special education, communication disorders, education leadership, vocational counseling, school counseling, and social work.

Graduate students in these professional discipline programs take four courses

relevant to transition for youth with disabilities and complete their discipline specific internship in high school settings. Across their coursework, students develop in-depth knowledge of other professional roles and responsibilities as they collaborate to apply their understanding of evidence-based transition practices. In addition to coursework, students in the Teaming for Transition program are invited to participate in Arkansas Transition Service's Summits in order to learn from schools developing their own transition practices.

Across the next 4 years, graduate students interested in special education or communication disorders will have the opportunity to apply to have their master's tuition and a portion of textbook costs paid for while they specialize in transition. About 36 master's degrees in either Special Education or Communication disorders between 2018-2022 will be paid for by the grant.

Teaming for Transition is working to recruit, train, and prepare future transition team members with in depth knowledge of transition, skills based in evidence-based transition practices and discipline specific competencies, and confidence in their capacity to service on effective interdisciplinary teams.

For more information on Teaming for Transition go to the website linked here <https://cied.uark.edu/transition/> or contact Dr. Suzanne Kucharczyk at suzannek@uark.edu.

Arkansas Transition Services Newsletter

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Using Transition Curriculum to Prepare Students for Adult Life!

by Karen Randolph

There are a variety of transition curricula on the market design to prepare students for adult life. In this article we will briefly discuss four free Self-Determination curricula. These four can be located at ZARROW Center: <http://www.ou.edu/education/centers-and-partnerships/zarrow>.

ME! Lessons for Teaching Self-Awareness and Self-Advocacy. There are 1-10 units which are aligned with Arkansas Common Core Standards. This curriculum has everything you need in teaching self-awareness and advocacy skills with materials and resources available to download when needed. These lessons are also effective with middle and junior high students. It is recommended that you follow the units in sequence; however, as a teacher you can modify and adjust to fit your class needs.

ChoiceMaker Self-Determination Curriculum and Lesson Packages. In this curriculum there are three strands: (1) *Choosing Goals*, (2) *Expressing Goals*, (3) *Taking Action*. These strands address the teaching objectives for the areas in transition planning: Employment, Education and Daily Living. ChoiceMaker Curriculum lessons can be infused into existing coursework programs. *Choosing Goals and Taking Action* modules can be used in general education and or special education classrooms. These modules may be used together or separately in whatever order will fit your educational needs. *The Self-Directed IEP* module is designed for students receiving services in Special Education. Each of the lesson modules include a Teacher's manual and student workbook. There are videos and reproducibles that align with the lessons.

Student-Directed Transition Planning (SDTP). This curriculum consists of eight lessons to facilitate high school students to adult life planning. SDTP joins students, families and educators to actively participate in transition-focused IEP meetings. There is a section on teaching students about the importance of the Summary of Performance and Course of Study. Lessons are taught through PowerPoints and step-by-step instruction using a Teacher's Guide.

Whose Future Is It Anyway? 2nd Edition. This is another student-directed transition planning process curriculum, which is also designed to prepare students for their IEP meetings. It consist of six sections that contain 36 lessons. It includes a Coaches Guide that outlines the lessons and explains how to teach each lesson.

These are just a few of the free curricula available to you online. If you would like more information on transition curricula, please contact your Transition Consultant. Each consultant has a library of resources that you may checkout for exploration or review.

Preparing for the 2018 Summit

by Jennifer Williams

It's just around the corner, the Arkansas Transition Services 2018 Summit! We, at ATS, are hoping that your district's transition team has already made plans to attend and if you haven't, it's not too late! This year's Summit will be held at the Embassy Suites Northwest Arkansas in Rogers, on November 5th and 6th. During the two days, there will be dynamic speakers, engaging breakout sessions, and team planning time with the focus on student development and student focused planning. If you are a returning transition team to the Summit, it is recommended your team meet to review your district's transition data and update the team's transition goals. If your district is new to the Summit, you will need to form a transition team, your transition consultant can help you!! Some people to consider when forming your team include your Arkansas Rehabilitation Services counselor, a school administrator, guidance counselor, parents, students, Career and Tech Ed teachers, and middle school sped teachers. (Just a reminder: teams attending the Summit need to bring a minimum of for team members.) Don't forget registration deadline is October 1. Visit the following link to register:

<http://www.arkansastransition.com/index.php/event-registration/2018-summit-registration>

We are looking forward to seeing you!

College Bound Arkansas 2018

by Carrie Tuttle

Arkansas Transition Services in partnership with the University of Central Arkansas Disability Resource Center has completed another successful year of College Bound Arkansas. For twelve years, we have offered high school students from across Arkansas the opportunity to prepare for their postsecondary education experience. We had twenty-two students from fifteen school districts participate this year.

Why should your students attend next year? We want Arkansas students with disabilities to be the best-prepared students for college that they can be. A major component of being prepared to enter college is an awareness of the significant differences between high school and college and the process that students will be required to utilize to get needed services on college campuses.

That is what College Bound Arkansas is all about. There is a major focus at College Bound Arkansas on self-advocacy and self-determination skills. We want the students who participate to know that they can and should go to college if that is what they truly want to do. We also want them to know they are going to have to take the initiative in getting the services they need to be successful. To help facilitate this we offer a mock class where a college professor gives the students a class lecture where engagement is expected. The students also attend workshops related to entering college; self-advocacy; assistive technology; time management and organizational skills; food and nutrition presentations and an adversity and risk taking discussion.

We will be offering College Bound Arkansas again in June of 2019. Please start thinking now of who in your school would benefit from this experience.



Arkansas DCDT Award

by Paul Johnston

It is that time again to nominate someone for the Arkansas Federation Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) Division on Career Development and Transition (DCDT) Award. This award may be given to a special education teacher or school transition coordinator with innovative practices, classes or creative programs that focus on the transition needs of students ages 14-21. The recipient will receive a monetary award of \$500.00 and a plaque to be awarded at the 2018 Arkansas Transition Summit Luncheon November 6th, 2018 in Rogers, AR.

This award helps to acknowledge outstanding programs from around the state. Some former winners have been Jerri Chronister-Greenwood, Edgar Piggee-Texarkana, Anette Nalls-Monticella, and Lucille Polk-Forrest City.

The application will be on-line this year. The link will be sent out soon. Incomplete applications will not be considered. Completed applications must be received on or before September 10th, 2018. The Award Committee will notify finalists by October 10th, 2018. The award recipient will be notified by email in October and will be recognized at the Arkansas Transition Services 2018 Summit Luncheon, November 6.

Please consider someone for this award so we can give credit for outstanding work!!

2018 Film Camp Review

by Bonnie Boaz

The second annual Inclusion Films Short Film Camp was held April 23-27, 2018. Thanks to collaborative efforts among Arkansas Rehabilitation Services, Arkansas Transition Services, Special Education Supervisor, Deborah Swink, the staff at Northwest Arkansas Community College, and of course, the staff of Inclusion Films, another tremendously successful camp is in the books! Arkansas Rehabilitation Services provided the funding to bring Inclusion Films to Arkansas and to provide some transportation for some students. Once students completed their applications for film camp, they were connected to a local Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor from Arkansas Rehabilitation Services. For some campers this was the first connection to ARS, an agency that can help our students reach their goals for life after high school.

This year we had fifty students sign up for an exciting week that started with Joey Travolta introducing his camera, lighting, sound, and editing crew, as well as the team instructors, Barry Pearl, Ashley Edwards (NWACC), and Michael Constine. "Inside the Actor's Studio," was the theme for the short films. Mr. Travolta quickly got their attention, as the first film he showed was his brother, John Travolta, on the actual show, "Inside the Actor's Studio." Students were almost immediately comfortable as they listened to Joey joke about the props--yoga mats, clock, and a car sun visor to name a few, and how they could use them in their films.

By the end of the week, three teams were able to share their work with pride to the editing team. This amazing team of editors from Inclusion Films worked all weekend to prepare the films for a sneak preview at the Bentonville Film Festival! May 2, the red carpet was rolled out as Cox Communications sponsored a sneak preview at the Skylight Cinema in Bentonville. There was standing room only in the theatre as students and their families anxiously awaited the lights to go down and the film to roll. Once it started, there was frequent laughter and delight as students saw themselves on the big screen.



Applause was heard throughout and confirmed that the students' hard work paid off. What everyone saw during the sneak preview was not just a great set of short films, but students who realized their potential and found that they can meet challenges when given the opportunity! There have never been so many true shining stars in Bentonville as there was that night. Congratulations to all the campers! Thank you to the districts who were able to help their students experience a week at Film Camp.

If you missed the sneak preview, we are excited to provide another opportunity to catch Arkansas students on the big screen! Join us for the red carpet event at the Summit on the evening of November 5 at the Embassy Suites in Rogers! You can register to attend when you register for the Summit. Don't miss it!



Students quickly learned who their instructor would be and filmmaking. It was a challenging week to say the least with each attendee interviewing with Joey Travolta, discussing their story line, presenting their ideas for approval by Joey, casting, scriptwriting, and filming all happening! There were also public service announcements they had to create and film, not to mention tours going on for teachers, families, and state representatives, who were deeply intrigued by the work of the students and the filmmaking process.



New OWL Schools Selected!

by Bonnie Boaz

Recently 27 schools submitted proposals for the Opportunities for Work Based Learning program through Arkansas Rehabilitation Services with technical assistance provided by both ARS and Arkansas Transition Services. Sixteen proposals were selected and those districts have begun the process of getting contracts signed with ARS, as well as attending Transition Class and Toolkit trainings with Arkansas Transition Services.

Most of you probably are aware that Arkansas Rehabilitation Services has been working hard to help school districts provide a work based learning program within a transition class. This allows students with disabilities the opportunity for work experiences prior to exiting high school—a predictor of post-school success that makes great sense to include for our students!

OWL programs vary by district and with the new round of accepted proposals, there are 32 districts in the OWL program. The intent is to enhance transition programming within IDEA mandates while meeting the requirements of the **Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act (WIOA)** through a coordinated set of activities. WIOA is a federal law that became effective in 2014. It reauthorized and amended the Workforce Investment Act and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. The law consists of five titles--Title IV contains the requirements for the Vocational Rehabilitation program.

Purpose of WIOA: (a) support job seekers and workers in accessing employment, education, training, and support services to succeed in the labor market; and (b) match employers with skilled workers needed to compete in the global economy.

With the passing of WIOA, many special education teachers and vocational rehabilitation (VR) counselors have questions about how it affects their work with students with disabilities. Section 4 of the Act now provides VR agencies across the nation with the opportunity to provide expanded services in five specific focus areas to students with disabilities. **Pre-Employment Transition Services (PreETS)** are available to students, regardless if they have applied for VR services.

Pre-ETS (earliest set of VR Services a student can access) focus areas include:

- **Job Exploration Counseling** to support a discovery process using customized tools that help students discover their skills, abilities, and interests
- **Post-secondary Exploration** to provide counseling on opportunities for enrollment in local community college / post-secondary education programs
- **Instruction in Self-Advocacy** to assist students in gaining the knowledge and skills to effectively communicate, convey, negotiate, or assert their own interests and/or desires
- **Work-Place Readiness Training** to develop social skills and independent living
- **Work-based Learning Experiences** to provide work opportunities and experiences outside of the traditional school setting

These are all components that easily fit in a transition class/OWL program! There will be opportunities every year for districts to submit a proposal for the OWL program. If you are interested talk to your transition consultant now to start preparing. We can provide you with tools, training, and technical assistance that will help you determine if the OWL program is right for your school! The data is already showing success for students as reports are coming in that students are getting hired, getting hired for higher pay, paying attention to their hygiene, enjoying work, and staying motivated to stay in school to get the skills they need to work. We will share stories and hopefully there will be some from your school in the near future!

Setting to Succeed in the New School Year

by Lisa Washington

Summer is over and a new school year is here and with it comes new schedules, new students and a new instructional strategies and methods focused on transition related content. No matter what stage you or your district's transition teams are on, the following evidence-based curricula can be used as you continue developing your transition programs to support students' post-secondary goals related to self-determination, career awareness, postsecondary education, and community participation.

FDIC: Money Smart – A Financial Education Curriculum:

Money Smart is a comprehensive financial education curriculum designed to help low and moderate income individuals outside the financial mainstream enhance their financial skills and create positive banking relationships. Money Smart has reached over 3 million consumers since 2001. Research shows that the curriculum can positively influence how consumers manage their finances, and these changes are sustainable in the months after the training. Financial education fosters financial stability for individuals, families, and entire communities. The more people know about credit and banking services, the more likely they are to increase savings, buy homes, and improve their financial health and well-being and is available free of charge in several versions.

<https://www.fdic.gov/consumers/consumer/moneysmart/index.html>

Transportation Education Curriculum:

The goal of this transportation education curriculum is to provide educators, transit professionals, families, and others with strategies for integrating transportation content, including travel instruction, into the educational experience for students, including students with disabilities. The curriculum consists of an Introduction and nine modules.

This curriculum can:

- Help learners understand why public transportation education is critical to students' post-secondary success
- Provide a framework for transportation education from student assessment through the provision of travel instruction
- Demonstrate how transportation and education professionals can work together to address student transportation needs
- Provide best practices for engaging students, families, transit professionals and the community in transportation education
- Provide resources to help educators and transportation professionals succeed in meeting student educational needs
- Learn about transportation resources, such as mobility management systems, that can be used by educators

Videos are included in some of the modules, and templates and tools are available to download and customize to a learner's own setting. Recommended software includes an internet browser (Google Chrome, Mozilla Firefox or Internet Explorer) and YouTube for video viewing.

<https://www.nadtc.org/resources-publications/transportation-education-curriculum/>

National Technical Assistance on Transition Center Capacity Building Institute:

https://www.transitionta.org/system/files/cbi/Curriculum%20Review%20Form_HANDOUT%203_Rowe.pdf?file=1&type=node&id=1461&force=0

If you need further assistance or additional materials, please contact your area consultant and/or visit our website at www.arkansastransition.com

OWL Success Stories

by Gretchen Hunt, Clinton School District

I begin this highlight with a graduated senior, Justin Bigelow, who will be attending UACCM this fall studying Automotive Service Technology. Justin has been a huge success story at Clinton High School by representing the Opportunities for Work-Based Learning (OWL) Program with honor. He worked as our only Clinton Sporting Events Clean-up Crew person under the direction of Curtis Dunham this past school year. Justin would drive to the sporting events and cleanup after the event was over. Parents in the community started noticing Justin as he worked. Because of this, I received several phone calls from parents asking if their child would be eligible for the OWL Program. They wanted their kids to be a part of a program where manners and work ethic were a top priority. After I went over the qualifications, many were sad that their child was not eligible, but would always state, "Well I am thankful that there is a program that has the best interest for kids and their families."

Justin made an impression not only on these parents, but also on Paul Maddox. Mr. Maddox agreed to let him work at the Transportation Department for one of Justin's STEP jobs. Because of Justin's amazing work ethic, Paul approached the Administration to see if there would be a position for him over the summer. We found out that there were not any positions open. We were all disappointed! A few weeks later, I received a phone call from Robin Tate, our Arkansas Rehabilitation Counselor at Clinton High School. She stated that a few of our OWL students might be eligible for summer work through Arkansas Rehabilitation Services. She wanted to know if Clinton High School had any students who might be interested. I told her that I knew a few who were responsible!!! Since then, Justin has worked every Monday and Tuesday. The income that he has earned has afforded him to pay his bills. The OWL program has given Justin direction to know where his passions lie. Justin is instilling that passion for life, with a well thought out plan. A big shout out to the OWL Program for enabling Justin to pursue a successful life!

The next student that has become an overnight success is Garrett Nichols. Garrett will be a Senior this upcoming school year. I, Gretchen Hunt, was introduced to Garrett's passion for technology while fulfilling a long-term subbing position for the late David Smith. One day in class, I could not get a CD to play for my students because my computer lacked the necessary parts. I was frustrated and stated, "What school places equipment in a teacher's room that isn't capable of doing what needs to be done?" (Maybe you all can relate!) The next thing I know, Garrett is saying, "Mrs. Hunt, I can fix that in two to five minutes." I said, "Okay, your time starts now." Garrett simply used a part from another computer in the room! In less than ten minutes, I was back on point with my lesson plan. I told Deb Swink about Garrett and we both started looking for ways to enable Garrett's talents to be put to use. At this point, you might be guessing where I am heading with this success story. Thanks to the OWL Program, Garrett has an office set up in the Technology Department and his gift with technology is being utilized. In the past, Garrett has had problems staying focused on his classwork. When that happens now, he losses time doing what he truly loves, working with technology. This part of the OWL Program has allowed us to help Garrett refocus! He is completing and turning in all his assignments because he has something to look forward to. Garrett has worked faithfully with the Technology Team at Clinton Public School District during this past school year and this summer. His mother, who is a single mom, could not be more pleased with the program because she knows that he is doing something good for himself and for others. She knows that he will continue to make good choices because of his love for technology and the paycheck that he earns.

It is fair to say, that without the OWL Program these students might have found less productive ways to spend their summer break. By using Justin and Garrett as a couple of examples, I can state that the OWL Program has empowered our students to stay more focused and to become more driven to accomplish their passions in life.

At this time, we would like to recognize the late David Smith who first taught Transitions at Clinton High School! He would be proud to know that his passion still lives on in the lives of his students because of the OWL Program. The Clinton School District would like to also send our deepest regards to Arkansas Rehabilitation Services, Arkansas Transition Services, and the Arkansas Department of Education for partnering and bringing life into our students and their families in the community of Clinton, Arkansas, through the OWL Program!!